

**MEMORANDUM****Mount Snow West Lake Project Update****July 13, 2015**

People travelling in the southern Vermont Deerfield Valley during summer 2015 have noticed occasional murky flows in Cold Brook and the Deerfield River. These have been most evident after rain events, but some people have also noticed murky water in between rainy days this summer. This occasional turbidity is attributable to Mount Snow's "West Lake" snowmaking pond construction and stream restoration work, off of Cold Brook Road in Dover and Wilmington, Vermont.

The Mount Snow West Lake project is a 3-phase project, started in 2015 and scheduled to be completed in 2016. The project includes constructing a snowmaking pipeline, a snowmaking pond, and the filling of two gravel pit excavations on Cold Brook. These gravel pits were dug several decades ago, then when Cold Brook jumped its banks into the pits during Tropical Storm Irene unnatural on-stream ponds were created. As part of this project, Mount Snow has voluntarily agreed to fill these unnatural on-stream ponds. An on-stream pond causes poor water quality, particularly from sunlight warming water that causes downstream thermal impacts to trout species. Trout prefer a cold-water habitat, and the warmed water flowing through the on-stream ponds degrades downstream trout habitat in Cold Brook and the Deerfield River. This voluntary stream restoration project will have major long-term benefits to both Cold Brook and the Deerfield River.

Various state and federal agencies have issued permits for the 3-phased project, which will provide an overall benefit to water and wetland resources. Numerous methods have been utilized to reduce and eliminate sediment discharges which cause murky stream flows. Mount Snow's project managers have been actively increasing the size and effectiveness of the sediment capture and treatment systems, both in the excavation of West Lake, and the filling of the two unnatural on-stream ponds. VTANR staff has been called by citizens concerned about recent murky water in Cold Brook and VTANR shares these concerns. The VTANR has directed the use of several and increasing means to achieve the control of the sediment and the site is being monitored by VTANR staff on a regular and on-going schedule of site inspections. Mount Snow staff and engineering consultants are regularly reporting on their continued efforts to address and minimize sediment discharges in weekly and sometimes daily communications with VTANR regulatory staff. The West Lake/Cold Brook Restoration is expected to yield much higher quality river habitat in Cold Brook at the conclusion of the project.

Inquiries regarding this project should be directed to Brendan Ryan at Mount Snow Resort (203-915-5760), or to Todd Menees in VTANR's Watershed Management Division at 802-345-3510.